

still be of the same *innate* intelligence. But if my theory is correct they would still, owing to prolonged adolescence, produce a negative correlation until a later age.

It should not be difficult to test this statistically.

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## Our Crowded Island

*To the Editor, Eugenics Review*

SIR,—In his most admirable article on "Our Crowded Island" (April 1948, p. 23), Sir Charles Arden-Close says: "If our numbers are not for ever to go on increasing, we must face the difficulties resulting from an ageing population. . . . If a certain number of the young and fit emigrate to the Dominions, the average age at home must still further increase, and we must face this difficulty also."

I write to point out that one country—Ireland—has already faced this difficulty, and with splendid results. At the census of 1841 Ireland had over 8,000,000 people. At the census of 1861 she had not quite 5,800,000. Now she has just over 4,000,000. This continuous fall is almost entirely due to emigration, for, except during the potato famine, births have always exceeded deaths. One of the effects was a tremendous ageing of the population, because the great majority of emigrants are young. Commenting on the Eire census of 1936 the *Irish Times* (Dublin) says: "There has been an increase in the proportion of the population in the oldest age-group from 3.1 per cent in 1841 to 9.7 per cent in 1936. It is a remarkable fact that, although the total population declined by 3,560,000 between 1841 and 1936, the numbers aged 65 years and over actually increased in the same period by 87,000."

What has been the economic result? Mr. Colin Clark, the only statistician who has made an international comparison for the whole world, says: "The situation in Ireland in the early nineteenth century was Malthusian in that it represented the pressure of a rapidly growing population, deprived of all possibilities of industrial development, upon limited means of subsistence. The situation was only resolved by a wholesale outflow of population, which, in the course of a century, raised Ireland from the poorest to one of the richest countries of Europe." (*Conditions of Economic Progress*, page 170.)

Clark now places Eire fourth in Europe, and ninth in the world, in real income per head. The other authorities I have consulted tell much the same story.

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## Illegitimacy

*To the Editor, Eugenics Review*

SIR,—The democratic government of Hungary has also abolished "illegitimacy," this "survival of the barbaric past," as Mr. B. Charlesworth calls it in his letter in your issue of April 1948. Hungary has now taken an important step in improving the legal position of the children born out of wedlock by giving "love children" the same rights as legitimate children. The percentage of illegitimate births in this country is, since the first world war, practically stationary, i.e. about 9 per cent; in 1946 it was 8.2 per cent, 14,218 children being born out of wedlock, against 159,390 legitimate births. In international comparison the number of illegitimate births in Hungary is smaller than in Sweden, but much higher than in England or Switzerland. These are simple statistical facts. The question of illegitimacy is not at all a question of hygiene, but rather of social interest; the fate of illegitimate children is a long series of social ills. However, the eugenicist is also interested in the problem. An illegitimate child may in some ways be different from a legitimate child, not because of any hereditary difference, but merely because of environment.

Concerning the confusion of environmental forces and effects with those of heredity, may I be allowed to refer to my investigations made some years ago in the mental hospital in Budapest-Angyalföld. During the period 1908-27 there were 563 adult patients (296 males and 267 females) of illegitimate origin in this hospital. In 1927 the number of illegitimate patients was 4.5 per cent, the highest number in twenty years. Mental disorders of absolutely exogenous origin occurred in 36.7 per cent of the illegitimate men and in 35.1 per cent of the women. In these figures there is a considerable difference observable in comparison to those of legitimate patients, and these numbers in illegitimates are accounted for by the fact that whereas in illegitimate women the rate for general paralysis is very high (22.5 per cent) in legitimate women it is found to be only 10 per cent. In other mental disorders there is no important difference between the percentage of legitimates and illegitimates; thus the exogenous characteristic is explicit. The nature of social life and conditions, the lack of stronger family ties in addition to other unfavourable environmental factors hardly protect the illegitimate woman from coming in contact with sexual vice and promiscuity and thus acquiring a syphilitic infection. Heredity was in the whole material as frequent as in general in different mental diseases. A specific endogenous type for illegitimacy does not exist. No doubt there is a biased and false doctrine that illegitimacy as such—even the tendency to have illegitimate children—has an hereditary basis.

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